

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This edition of *Biophilately* should arrive in your possession closely following the 2013 National Topical Stamp Show where the Biology Unit held its annual membership meeting. See page 82 for a report on the annual Unit meeting and page 91 for a description of the NTSS events.

One of the key topics under discussion at the meeting was the nomination of candidates for election of the Unit officer positions. You will find a separate ballot containing these nominations enclosed with this copy of the journal. Please make your selections and return it as soon as possible, but **not later than 15 July 2013** to the Secretary, Chris Dahle. The officer positions include President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and four Unit Directors. We will publish the results in the next edition of *Biophilately*.

I have noticed from advertising in the new issues services that there seem to be no small amount of stamp issues currently being offered commemorating 2013 as the Year of the Snake in the Chinese zodiac. In keeping with that theme, this edition of *Biophilately* provides some snake-related articles that I hope you will find interesting. Unfortunately, I have not been able to lock in a permanent Associate Editor for Herpetology, but I am still actively seeking someone to take on this role. Please contact me, if you are interested.

On page 143, you will find more of our continuing column introducing our Associate Editors. This quarter we feature our New Birds editor, Chuck Braun, and our Paleontology editor, Dr. Hans-Peter Schultze.

Naturally you will also find the regular quarterly checklists of new issues in this edition. There is a bonus in the "Mammalia" section as it contains the entries that missed the deadline for the last issue as well as those for the current edition. This time as I was editing the lists, I recalled recently looking over the very early editions of the journal from the 1950s. In those times, the listings of **all** new biological issues could fit on a single page. It is amazing how far topical collecting has come. Some Unit members in those days collected every type of issue with a biological theme. Even if one could afford it, I do not see how one could manage to do that today.

One of our former Biology Unit members has been selected as American Topical Association 2013 Distinguished Topical Philatelist. Jean C. Stout (BU1801) joined the Unit in 2009, but later dropped out to concentrate on the Penguins on Stamps Study Unit, which she co-founded. Last year's DTP was our own Director, Fred Skvara. In fact, 26 of the 120 DTP recipients have been members of the Biology Unit, so our Unit is doing pretty well. See page 101 for more about this year's winner.

For readers who may not be aware, the Biology Unit is now in its sixty-second year and is the second oldest study unit in the American Topical Association behind the Casey Jones Railroad Unit. Our Unit from the very beginning began publishing a newsletter that ultimately evolved into the journal you are reading. (I was going to write "the journal you now hold in your hands," but I realized that many of our members no longer receive a printed copy. Instead they view the journal on-line or download it from our web site.)

Fred Skvara has started republishing older articles in *Scalpel and Tongs*, the journal of the Medical Subjects Unit, and it occurred to me that the earlier editions of our journal might contain interesting and useful reference articles that none of the current members have ever read, or even know exist. So, I decided to begin a project to index all of the previous editions and see if I could find items to re-publish occasionally. Our librarian, Mark Reineke, has been a big help providing scans of older editions, and ultimately we plan to have all of these available in electronic format. It is not much good to have an index to publications you cannot access. There are some immense complications involved, which I shall describe at a later date.

DUES RATES (US\$)

Regular membership (US & Canada)	\$20
Overseas membership	\$25
Overseas airmail (add)	\$10

ADVERTISING RATES

Full page insertion	\$20
Half page insertion	\$10
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Please see the Biology Unit web site (www.biophilately.org) for membership applications. Several payment options are available. Send applications and payments payable to the Biology Unit of ATA to:
Chris Dahle, 1401 Linmar Drive NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

As I have read through editions from the past, one theme continues throughout the span of publication, and that is the requests for input from Unit members. So many issues are filled with articles and commentary from the journal editor with lesser input from other contributors. When the editors have been articulate and informed, this has provided interesting reading despite the lack of variety. When editors have been less erudite, the content has suffered. I am perfectly happy to fill up the journal with my own ramblings on various subjects, but I suspect the readership will tire of this in short order and this publication is not titled "The Congrove Newsletter." More importantly, one of the primary purposes of this organization is to serve as a **cooperative study unit** so that every member might provide some of their expertise and gain some knowledge from others in return.

It is inevitable that many members do not contribute anything other than their membership dues to the organizations that they join. What is concerning is that these members possess knowledge that would be at least informative and more likely useful and educational to the rest of the Unit members.

In an editorial in Volume 11, Number 3, Dr. Willard F. Stanley lamented the lack of responses from the membership to repeated pleas for help with various Unit projects and for input for the journal. He acknowledged that everyone was "busy" with their many obligations and projects, but then presented this request that I believe is worthy of consideration by all of our members today:

"When I was a child, I played the part of the Devil in one Children's Day Program. My part considered the various ways by which I could be an effective devil. Finally, the decision reached was to gently persuade the various characters to—WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW. It is very effective! Please—don't listen to this devil. Jot down what comes to your mind—possibly on a post card—and get it to me. Also—put aside something else, this once, and send me that bit of information you have had such good intentions about."

In these days of more efficient and faster communications, it is not necessary to resort to post cards. Just send me an e-mail message to jackcongrove@comcast.net. There is no need to spend hours composing and formatting a submission. I will have to edit it to fit anyway. All I need are your ideas and a couple paragraphs. I can take care of the formatting and I am always looking for short articles to insert in partial pages. If it seems that we could expand your submission into a longer article, or even if you provide more extensive input, we can work together to easily tune it up. Please, do not "Wait Until Tomorrow."

Jack Congrove